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fact, there is nothing to show that Corneille is there referring to any special play. He is merely giving examples of the kind of literary criticism then in vogue among gentlefolk. He is furnishing no evidence that can be relied on for the dating of the play. All we can do, until proof to the contrary is produced, is to date the play according to the probabilities of the case, which, as I showed seven years ago,² point more strongly to 1632 than to any other year.³

H. CARRINGTON LANCASTER.

Gottfried Kellers Leben mit Benutzung von Jakob Baechtolds Biographie dargestellt von Emil Ermatinger. Stuttgart und Berlin, 1916.

Gottfried Kellers Briefe und Tagebücher 1830-1861, herausgegeben von Emil Ermatinger. Stuttgart und Berlin, 1916.

Gottfried Kellers Briefe und Tagebücher 1861-1890, herausgegeben von Emil Ermatinger. Stuttgart und Berlin, 1919.

Paul Heyse und Gottfried Keller im Briefwechsel, von Max Kalbeck. Braunschweig, 1919.

The last word on Gottfried Keller, at least for the time being, is Emil Ermatinger's *Gottfried Kellers Leben, Briefe und Tagebücher*, in three volumes; or if not the last word, it is at least somewhere near the next to the last: the definitive scholarly edition of Keller's works has not yet appeared. This is promised for the near future.

Of the documents to which Ermatinger has access he still leaves some 200 letters unpublished:

Aber auch diese Sammlung der Briefe ist nur eine Auslese. Wohl zweihundert habe ich noch zurückbehalten. Aufgenommen habe ich alle mir zur Kenntnis gekommen Stücke, die irgendwelche Bereicherung unseres Wissens um Keller, den Menschen wie den

² *M. L. N.*, xxx, 4. Mr. R.-B. cites this article, but uses it little.

³ Typographical errors should be corrected as follows: p. xxv, l. 26, read *Sylvie*; p. xxvii, l. 16, Du Ryer, instead of Rotrou; p. xxviii, l. 14, aristocracy; p. 99, l. 36, *Mariane*; p. 106, l. 46, *maitresse*; p. 107, l. 15, *prétend*; p. 111, l. 17, à; p. 117, l. 42, *rigueurs*; pp. 3-19 (running title), premier.

Künstler, bedeuten. Weggelassen wurden nur—mit ganz wenigen Ausnahmen, bei denen mir eine Veröffentlichung noch nicht gestattet wurde—blosse Geschäftsbriefe oder kurze Billette, in denen sich auch ein so gottbegnadeter Stilkünstler wie Gottfried Keller auf dem Geleise der Convention bewegt. Ich hoffe, die Freunde des Dichters werden es mir danken, dass ich seine Briefkostbarkeiten nicht mit dem belanglosen Wuste des Alltags überschüttet habe. (Preface, vol. II.)

Not included in the Ermatinger material are all but one of Keller's letters to Paul Heyse; mention of this material will be made later.

It is possible that in the course of time additional Keller material of some interest and importance may be forthcoming. But in all probability Ermatinger's work will remain for a considerable time the chief repository of Keller biography.

Baechtold's work with its human sympathy for the subject is still a readable and useful book. It has never been, however, wholly satisfactory as a piece of finished, scholarly biography. With the mass of new material that has become available since it was written it has ceased to be the last word possible on the life of Keller. It is to add this last word that Ermatinger undertook a task that is less than an entirely new book on Keller such as Baldensperger's in its time, and considerably more than a new and amplified edition of the old Baechtold. Baldensperger contributed considerably to Keller scholarship in the way of critical appreciation, but so far as his biographical material is concerned, he leans wholly upon Baechtold, and in that respect he is now superseded along with Baechtold.

A new and amplified Baechtold with "möglichster Schonung des Baechtoldschen Textes" was by no means the comparatively simple task it might at first appear. Ermatinger in undertaking the work no doubt presently realized that an entirely new biography with Baechtold merely as one of the sources would actually have been less difficult and dangerous. Concerning the peculiar difficulty of the undertaking Ermatinger says in the preface:

Die ganze Wirkungskraft dieses Umarbeitungsplanes durchschaute ich, als ich an die Arbeit herantrat, noch nicht. Es war "möglichste Schonung des Baechtoldschen Textes" ausgemacht worden. Ich glaubte denn auch zuerst, meine Erweiterungen unter leichter Überfeilung des ursprünglichen Wortlautes und mit den nötigen Verzahnungen einfügen zu können. Allein bald offenbarte

sich der minenartige Charakter des Umbauplanes: er sprengte den alten Bau nach allen Richtungen und zwang zu durchgehender Neuarbeit. Wer dies bedauert und das alte Werk nicht missen mag, hat den Trost, Baechtolds Wortlaut in der einbändigen kleinen Ausgabe weiter zu benützen, die seine Witwe besorgt hat.

The finished product of this radical reconstruction might easily have been worse. It is very doubtful if the reader unfamiliar with Baechtold could detect the patchwork. For one with a familiarity with Baechtold's text there is the additional delight in the realization of the skill with which the amalgamation was accomplished. To use the best of Baechtold so naturally and with such apparent ease, to get away so completely from his occasional structural clumsiness where it seemed necessary to do so, and to weave the whole into a well-knit narrative was no small achievement. In reading text obviously entirely new, one suddenly but smoothly glides into the familiar phrases of Baechtold and then just as suddenly and smoothly out again into obviously Ermatinger text. To depart so far from the original in general structure and arrangement and yet to have it always on hand with "möglichster Schonung" etc. when the occasion seemed propitious, betrays a consummate familiarity with the Baechtold version and the material as a whole and a skill in recasting it eminently equal to the task.

The "möglichste Schonung des Baechtoldschen Textes" by no means signifies a lack of independence as to interpretation and point of view on the part of Ermatinger; nor is it entirely free from an unobtrusive touch of humor here and there. In speaking of the poet's more or less unpoetic sister Regula, Baechtold says: "Die Schwester blieb lebenslang ein bescheidenes Wesen, das man sich, bis auf die letzten Jahre, ganz gut aus der Umgebung des Bruders wegdenken kann." With "möglichster Schonung" even of the phraseology Ermatinger says: "Die Schwester Regula blieb lebenslang ein bescheidenes Wesen, das man sich aber doch nicht aus der Umgebung des Bruders wegdenken mag." Ermatinger does much to tone down Baechtold's somewhat too naturalistic portrait of the gifted poet's sister, upon whom the gods had smiled with no excess of kindness. As in other cases, Baechtold naturally had the advantage of more immediate observation, Ermatinger that of a truer time perspective. Thruout the whole work Ermatinger brings a cooler and more objective scholarship to bear upon his subject than Baechtold, and certainly as great a human sympathy and as broad a human understanding.

Where Baechtold betrays an occasional, but by no means objectionable, gossipy flavor Ermatinger usually considerably weakens the dilution. Many picturesque idiosyncrasies of diction or expression in Baechtold are polished out in Ermatinger. Those who miss these things in Ermatinger may still enjoy them in the "Kleine Ausgabe" of Baechtold, essentially and in detail the same text as the complete Baechtold with the letters and diaries left out. Not even Ermatinger himself is so obsessed with the ambition entirely to supplant Baechtold as to omit mention of this in his preface.

Even for those who prefer the more picturesque and more brusque Baechtold, Ermatinger is a more than ordinarily readable book. The separation of the main text of the biography and the letters and diaries into separate volumes prepares the way for the continuity and the scholarly finish achieved by greater orderliness and relevancy in the arrangement of the narrative material itself in the case of Ermatinger as compared with his original. Occasional irrelevancies are omitted or given less space, but numerous interesting details that throw light upon the character and personality of the man rather than the artist or poet are by no means excluded by Ermatinger. In fact, much is added or amplified that does not appear in Baechtold at all or is passed over lightly. In Ermatinger there is, besides, better scholarly arrangement, greater emphasis upon those things that deal with Keller's development as an artist and as a poet. A better balance and greater technical skill make Ermatinger easier reading and assure a much more compact, a clearer and less attenuated, impression of the facts of Keller's life and personality. The fuller treatment of many details of Keller's life, the addition of some, by no means unimportant, episodes and the letters, about two hundred in number, hitherto unpublished, or published only recently in periodicals, make Ermatinger's work indispensable for the serious student of Keller's life and works.

Baechtold confines himself mainly to the more purely biographical; Ermatinger adds much valuable literary discussion in the way of critical comment and literary appreciation. In his critical comment and in drawing conclusions from the facts before him, Ermatinger is more conservative and objective, less positive and dogmatic than Baechtold. Thus, for example, Baechtold shows a decided tendency to belittle Feuerbach's influence upon Keller: "Diese Zeit des Unglaubens bildet indes nur einen Durchgangs-

punkt zu seiner (Kellers) späteren abgeklärten Religion, die in dem Goetheschen Satze gipfelt: 'das Unerforschliche ruhig verehren.'" (Baechtold, I, 333.) No doubt with this page of Baechtold before him Professor Walz ("The Life of Gottfried Keller," *The German Classics of the XIX and XX Centuries*, XIV, 7) draws the unqualified conclusion: "Later in life Keller returned to the religious views of his earlier years." It is exceedingly difficult to keep discussion such as this entirely free from subjective bias. This is Ermatinger's conclusion with regard to the Feuerbachian influence upon Keller: "In Feuerbachs Philosophie hat Keller eine Weltanschauung denkend erlebt, *seine* Weltanschauung, und darum wirkte sie auf ihn, trotz ihres atheistischen Charakters, als Religion, trotz ihrer materialistischen Tendenz als Idealismus, und eben deswegen übte sie auf ihn die gewaltige Wirkung, die eine bloss verstandmässige Annahme philosophischer Wahrheiten nicht haben kann. Sie hat sein dichterisches Schaffen auf Jahrzehnte hinaus aufs mächtigste befruchtet." (Ermatinger I, 204, 205.)

Much of the added material in the biographical part of Ermatinger's work is based upon letters given in full in volumes II and III. This helps to account for the greater bulk of Ermatinger's work, but it is a decided gain over Baechtold in a much more important respect. In Baechtold the letters appear in full as part of the body of the narrative; in Ermatinger, everything in the letters that has direct and positive bearing upon Keller's development as a poet and a man, but nothing more, is utilized in the main body of the biography and made an integral part of it. It is not necessary, as in Baechtold, to wade thru passages of ephemeral correspondence for the sake of the occasional passages of permanent significance. For the Keller scholar, volumes II and III give the complete text of the letters and diaries. Much material that in Baechtold appears in foot-notes and appendices is likewise worked by Ermatinger into the main body of the text.

It is not the purpose of the present review to hunt down all the errata in the Ermatinger text and appendices. One or two that incidentally came to my notice may, however, be pointed out. Volume III, p. 591 (Allgemeines Namenverzeichnis) under "Heyse," II 460 should be II 461. There is likewise no mention of Heyse on page 530 of volume III as here indicated.

In the preface to Volume II Ermatinger expresses regret as to

his inability to publish more than a single one of Keller's letters to Paul Heyse. This gap in the Keller material is supplied by Max Kalbeck's publication of the Heyse-Keller correspondence. As to its value as a contribution to Keller literature Kalbeck says in the slightly florid introduction: "Wohl wird von epochmachenden Ereignissen und grundlegenden Tatsachen nichts darin vermeldet, das nicht schon anderweitig bekannt geworden wäre. . . . Biographen, Ausdeuter und Erklärer scheinen, zumal was Keller betrifft, den Stoff so gut wie erschöpft zu haben." He pays high tribute to Ermatinger's work, but makes one important claim for his own work in connection with the publication of the Heyse-Keller letters: it will enable the reader of these letters to correct the somewhat misleading impression he may get out of Ermatinger as to the coolness and lack of real spiritual contact on the part of Keller toward Heyse. Kalbeck's accusation that Ermatinger lacks full appreciation of the warmth of Keller's feelings toward Heyse is admissible but not wholly convincing. Kalbeck seems to read an excess of coolness toward Heyse into Ermatinger's essentially cool and objective weighing of the material before him. Ermatinger, as a matter of fact, in forming his estimate of the personal and literary relationship between Keller and Heyse, seems to give fully as much weight to that which Keller wrote *about* Heyse to others as to that which he says directly to Heyse in his letters to him. Keller obviously assumes a somewhat patronizing attitude toward the younger man, but he had a very high opinion of his work, if not of his excessive literary industry, sought his advice in literary matters on occasion and, in one particular instance at least, acted on it; thus he rejected the title *Excelsior* for his last novel on the strength of Heyse's judgment that it was not sufficiently Kellersque.

Kalbeck supplements the text of the letters with copious and valuable biographical and historical notes. These in each case immediately follow the letter they are intended to elucidate, an arrangement that is much more convenient and useful for the reader than if they had been added in a separate appendix.

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